



**Testimony for Judiciary Committee**

**Public Hearing regarding SB 1085: AN ACT CONCERNING THE LEGALIZATION OF THE RETAIL SALE AND POSSESSION OF CANNABIS AND CONCERNING ERASURE OF CRIMINAL RECORDS IN THE CASE OF CONVICTIONS BASED ON THE POSSESSION OF A SMALL AMOUNT OF CANNABIS.**

**Jill Spineti, President and CEO  
The Governor's Partnership to Protect Connecticut's Workforce DBA  
The Governor's Prevention Partnership**

**March 22, 2019**

Dear Chairmen Winfield and Stafstrom, Ranking Members Kissel and Rebimbas, and members of the Judiciary Committee:

For the past 30 years, The Governor's Prevention Partnership has made it our mission to safeguard young people from the dangers of drugs and alcohol. Although the conversation about marijuana has changed, our mission has not. If Connecticut is to pass legislation legalizing recreational marijuana for adults, the state must focus on keeping the drug out of vulnerable hands. The recently-released legalization proposals takes several steps towards protecting Connecticut's young people; we applaud committee leadership for your effort and want to be sure that these safeguards stay intact as the language evolves.

Most importantly, this legislation outlines that it remains illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to consume or possess marijuana, similarly to alcohol. Studies have shown that the young brain is not fully capable of making good choices until age 25 because it is not fully developed [1].

The Partnership also wants to highlight the importance of the proposed expansion of Connecticut's Social Host Law to include cannabis.

When the Social Host Law was originally enacted in 2012, some parents had accepted the perceived reality that their teenaged children may experiment with alcohol or marijuana, and that it could be done in a controlled environment without breaking the law.

Our state's current law goes beyond the actions of any minor person involved and may also include what may be called a social host. A social host is someone of legal drinking age who may either provide alcohol to a minor or at least be aware of a minor's possession of alcohol. The language as currently written in this bill includes an expansion to cannabis.

The state makes it illegal for any social host to permit a person under the age of 21 from being in possession of alcohol on any private property including a house, apartment or other private residence.

This is a common-sense expansion to put cannabis under the same umbrella as alcohol and the treatment of legal consumers supplying the substance to underage people.

The Partnership understands that this is only a rough draft of the legislation to legalize recreational marijuana. However, Connecticut must put the safety of children front-and-center as these bills take shape. We look forward to continuing this conversation and advocating for the safety of Connecticut's young people.

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**CITATIONS:**

[1] <https://www.stanfordchildrens.org/en/topic/default?id=understanding-the-teen-brain-1-3051>